

Executive Registry

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7 April 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Proposed Presidential Remarks on CIA

A planted question in the President's next press conference would seem the best way to elicit comments from him on CIA.

Question: Will the President comment on claims that the CIA is making policy, is not keeping Congress informed as what it does and that there should be a Congressional "Watchdog Committee" over its activities?

Answer: In answer to your question, let me say first, the CIA does not make national policy, it never has, and it never will.

Secondly, CIA is not a free-wheeling organization. It is part of the Executive Office of the President of the United States. It operates under the National Security Council which is chaired by the President of the United States. Its activities are fully coordinated with national policy interests.

In its wisdom, Congress gave necessary special authorities to the CIA, as an organization, and to the Director of Central Intelligence, who is also the President's personal advisor on intelligence activities and who coordinates the intelligence activities of the Government as they concern our national security. The present Director of Central Intelligence, head of CIA, and also advisor to me on intelligence as it affects the national security, is a distinguished, patriotic American, the Honorable John A. McCone, of California. He has devoted some 15 years to government service to Presidents of both national political parties. There are no politics involved in his selection. He is the man best qualified for this vital, secret, sensitive and somewhat thankless job. State, Defense, and other intelligence units must give him, as my representative, their full cooperation.

The CIA is well and adequately supervised. It has four subcommittees of Congress who know what it does. The subcommittees of the Senate Armed Services Committee, under Senator Russell, and of the House Armed Services Committee, under Mr. Vinson, are its parent

Chilton

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